

A second and possibly more dangerous H1N1 flu outbreak is expected to hit in the fall; Estimated vaccine doses available by October 15 have declined by half according to recent reports

***A second and possibly more dangerous H1N1 flu outbreak is expected to hit in the fall  
Estimated vaccine doses available by October 15 have declined by half according to recent reports***

Brentwood, NY – On Thursday, Rep. Steve Israel (D – N.Y.) joined with Brentwood Public Schools Superintendent Donna Jones and St. Francis Preparatory School Nurse Mary Pappas, who spotted the first H1N1 flu case in New York, to announce new legislation to help school nurses combat the H1N1 flu virus this school year. A second and possibly more dangerous wave of H1N1 flu is expected to hit during this fall flu season.

“As students head back to the classroom, schools need to be ready for them. This year that means preparing for a possible H1N1 flu outbreak,” Rep. Israel said. “I’m introducing legislation to support our school nurses who are going to be on the front lines in the battle against a flu pandemic. Fighting off the flu means training our nurses and school staffs to be the first responders and crisis managers if the flu outbreak hits their classrooms.”

“School nurses are the primary health professionals in schools throughout the country. When a crisis hits, whether it be weather-related, school violence, an act of terrorism, or the inevitable serious flu outbreaks, school administrators and parents look to the school nurses as first responders and crisis managers. Having funding for training programs that would ensure school nurses with up-to-date and turnkey crisis management knowledge is essential if the nation wants to effectively meet the needs of school children when emergency action is required,” said Sandra Delack, RN, BSN

President of the National Association of School Nurses.

Rep. Israel’s legislation, the School Protection Act of 2009, will create grants for schools to train nurses and staff as first responders and crisis managers for a pandemic scenario. Grants could also be used for training nurses to respond to biological or chemical attacks. The grant program would be authorized at \$20 million and run by the Department of Health and Human Services.

Schools across New York and on Long Island have been hit with cases of H1N1 flu, prompting some to shut down for up to a week. There is currently no federal program to help train nurses to respond to an H1N1 flu outbreak. Based on cases of H1N1 flu earlier this year, children are the most susceptible to infection.

Suffolk County has 184 confirmed cases of H1N1 flu. Nassau County has 106 confirmed cases of H1N1 flu.

Rep. Israel serves on the House Appropriations Committee.